

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) A system for withdrawing small amounts of body fluid comprising:

a drive unit having a holder, wherein the holder is moved from a first position into a second position when the drive unit is activated;

a disposable lancing unit which has a holding area that is removably positioned in the holder;

an elongate capillary structure, wherein a proximal end of the capillary structure comprises at least one capillary channel for transporting body fluid connected to the holding area;

a distal end of the capillary structure defining a tip which is suitable for piercing skin, wherein the distal end of the capillary structure is located outside the skin when the holder is arranged in the first position and inserted into the skin up to a puncture depth in the second position;

wherein the at least one capillary channel is open to the outside in an area which comprises at least a part of the longitudinal extension of the capillary structure extending beyond the distal end; and

wherein the drive unit moves the lancing device such that after the lancing device reaches the second position, the lancing device is moved back into a collecting position, such that in the collecting position a section of the capillary structure located in the skin is shorter than the section of the capillary structure when the lancing device is in the second position.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the entire length of the capillary structure from the proximal to the distal end is open to the outside.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the holding area has a detection zone for detecting at least one analyte, the detection zone being arranged such that the detection zone can take up body fluid from the capillary structure.

16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the drive unit moves the lancing unit in such a manner that the lancing unit remains in the second position for a time interval and subsequently, the lancing unit is moved into a position in which the distal end of the capillary structure is outside the skin.

17. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the capillary structure and holding area are integrally connected together.

Claims 18-19 (Canceled).

20. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 13 in which the area of the capillary structure that is open to the outside has a channel shape.

21. (Currently amended) The system of claim 20 wherein the channel-shaped area has an essentially[[V]] rectangular-shaped cross-section.

22. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the length of the capillary structure is in the range from 0.3 to 3 mm and the cross-section of the capillary structure is in the range from 0.03 to 0.8 mm.

23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 wherein the holding area and the capillary structure are made of silicon.

24. (Previously Presented) A system for withdrawing body fluid, comprising:
a lancing unit configured to couple to a drive unit, the lancing unit including
a detection zone configured to analyze the body fluid, and
a capillary structure having a lancing tip configured to cut an incision in skin, the
lancing tip defining a capillary groove for drawing the body fluid from the incision to the
detection zone via capillary action, wherein the capillary groove opens longitudinally along the
outside of the lancing tip to permit collection of the body fluid along the length of the lancing tip.

25. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, further comprising:
the drive unit, wherein the drive unit is coupled to the lancing unit.

26. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein:
the lancing unit includes a holding area in which a portion of the capillary structure is
arranged;
the holding area has a distal end from where the lancing tip extends and a top surface;
and
the capillary groove opens along the top surface of the holding area.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 26, wherein:
the lancing unit includes a plate capping the holding area;
the plate covers a portion of the capillary groove; and
the plate defines a window over the detection zone.

28. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the capillary structure
includes a pair of needles joined together.

29. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the capillary structure
includes a stranded wire with the capillary groove formed between adjacent wires.

30. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the capillary structure
includes a solid needle with the capillary groove defined therein.

31. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the detection zone includes an optical detector for analyzing the body fluid.

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the detection zone includes an electrochemical detector for analyzing the body fluid.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein:
the lancing tip has a distal end that initially contacts the skin during lancing; and
the capillary groove further opens at the distal end of the lancing tip.

34. (New) An apparatus, comprising:
a disposable lancing device comprising
 a holding area having a surface,
 a lancing tip extending from the holding area for piercing skin, the lancing tip
having a distal end that initially contacts the skin during piercing of the skin, the holding
area and the lancing tip being a monolithic structure,
 a detection zone disposed on the holding area for detecting analyte in body fluid,
and
 the holding area having an open capillary groove, the capillary groove opening
along the surface of the holding area from the distal end of the lancing tip to the detection
zone for transporting the body fluid via capillary action to the detection zone, the
capillary groove being uncovered along the entire length of the lancing tip to permit
collection of the body fluid along the entire length of the lancing tip.

35. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, further comprising:
a drive unit coupled to the disposable lancing device for firing the disposable lancing
device.

36. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein:
the lancing device includes a plate capping a portion of the capillary groove over the holding area; and
the plate defines a window over the detection zone.

37. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the detection zone includes a reagent configured for optical detection of the analyte.

38. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the detection zone includes a reagent configured for electrochemical detection of the analyte.

39. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the capillary groove further opens at the distal end of the lancing tip.

40. (New) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the holding area is made from a semiconductor material.